

THE
DEIST turned CHRISTIAN,
THE
PAPIST turned PROTESTANT,
AND THE
CALVINIST turned ARMINIAN,

By being undeceived concerning the
Doctrines of Free Justification by
Christ's Blood.

By Way of DIALOGUE between
EBENEZER HEWLETT and a DEIST. *H*



L O N D O N:

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T H E

DEIST turned CHRISTIAN, &c.

D E I S T.



Know those who are commonly called *Arminians*, are not of your Opinion about the Doctrine of Free Justification; for I have heard you say that you can vindicate from Scripture and Reason, that Men were justified freely whilst they were wicked, by *Christ's* undertaking Death and Sufferings: But they, the *Arminians*, say none can be justified till they believe.

Hewlett. Sir, if I found these Gentlemen were of my Mind in this particular Argument of Free Justification, then I should be eased of the Burden of publishing these my Thoughts to the World. I think that I have conceived an Idea which tends to remove many Objections against the Christian Religion, and to unite Christians together to be of one Mind; and therefore I thought it my Duty thus to do, tho' it is a Grief to me to be forced to write contrary to my

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Friends,

Friends, and to my own Interest. I assure you my chief End in this Undertaking, is to promote the Interest of the Christian Religion, for the Good of Mankind: And tho' it is hard to be hated and hurt by those for whom I run great Hazards to do them good; yet it is no more than that which has been done to one who is infinitely superior to me. If I could find any who would do it, I should be glad not to appear in publick Print; but I believe if I do not do it, it would not be done at all, and therefore I hope you will excuse my Forwardness.

Deist. You know it is the common Opinion of most among us, that the Reason why Christians are not of one Mind concerning Religion, is because Men are of different Abilities, and so behold Things in a different Light from one another.

Hew. I take that not to be the Case; because those very Persons who differ so much from one another about Religion, yet they can be of one Mind about their common Employment. The Workman who works on Metals, does not disagree about what to call them. If one of these Workmen shews a Piece of Brass, another does not say it is a Piece of Iron, or a third that it is Lead. No: Tho' they are of different Abilities, yet they agree in their Conceptions of all common Things: But the Workmen of Christ's Gospel do not agree about common Things: As for Instance, notwithstanding the Word *Justify* is a common Word, and one would think as easy to be understood by those who have spent many Years in learning the Meaning of Words, as a Piece of
Brass

Brass may be known by the Workman ; yet the former, that is, Ministers, differ in their Notion of this plain Word Justify. Some of them will have it, that to Justify is to indulge ; others of them say, to Justify is to impute another's Goodness to them : Others of Christ's Workmen tell us that to Justify is to pardon or forgive Sins ; and thus the Christian Religion is thrown into the utmost Confusion ; and that the Ignorant may not be able to discover the Fallacy, they tell them that the Scripture Sense of Justification, is contrary to our common Acceptation of that Word, which is the same, as to say the Bible is not good Language. If Workmen on Metals were to imitate *Christ's* Workmen, what Confusion would they breed in the World : As for Example, if one who did not well understand Metals, was to carry a Piece of Brass to enquire of different Workmen what it was, and one should say it is Copper, a second say it is Bell-metal, a third say it is Gold ; What could the Ignorant do in such a Case ? He could not believe all these Workmen, because they contradict each other, and he might doubt whether either of them were right. This would naturally breed as much Confusion in Trade as there is in Religion. I have oftentimes heard Ministers give many different Interpretations, and yet they might consider, that if these Interpretations are different, they cannot be all right. If you were to chuse several Goldsmiths, the one a *Papist*, another a *Calvinist*, a third an *Arminian* ; these would be of one Mind about Gold and Silver, in Things concerning their Employment, tho' of different Abilities, and altho' they cannot agree in Matters
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of Religion ; so that it is plain, that their different Abilities are not the Cause of their different Opinions about Religion. Had those who work on Metals bestowed so much Pains and Care to prevent the common People from knowing the Difference between one Sort of Metal and another, for a thousand Years together, as *Christ's* pretended Workmen have done to prevent the true Knowledge of proper Words and clear Ideas in Religion, for more than 1200 Years, I suppose by this Time Metals would be known as little as Religion is now.

Deist. Is it possible to attain to a satisfactory Knowledge of the Christian Religion ?

Hew. Yes, Sir, I think you may, if you are an impartial intent Enquirer.

Deist. I profess I have no Prejudice against Christianity. The Reason why I question its Divinity, is, because it is I think contrary to Reason : As for Instance, in relation to this Doctrine which you now espouse of God's justifying Men freely, I cannot understand ; for if it is free for nothing, then it is without Works or Faith, or in other Words, that God justifies Men whilst they are wicked. This is contrary to your Bible ; there it is said, *that God will not justify the Wicked*, *Exod. xxiii. 7.*

Hew. I shall attempt to prove that God has justified wicked Men by his Son, without imputing to them his Righteousness. *First*, I shall enquire what is the true Meaning of the Word *Justify*. *Secondly*, who were they the Scripture mentioned as thus freely justified by the Son of God. *Thirdly*, I shall prove that *Christ's* Undertak-

taking, did not prevail upon God to spare the then wicked World, but he thereby prevented those Destroyers from their dreadful Designs. *Fourthly*, That these my Notions naturally tend to convince the *Deist*, *Papist*, and *Calvinist* of their Mistake. *First*, I am to consider what is the true Meaning of the Word Justify; and this being rightly understood, naturally paves the Way for a clear Notion of these Ideas; and then to Justify, is to declare the Person thus tried, not to be guilty of the Charge brought against him, so that it is not Pardon, nor Acceptance, nor Indulgency, neither is it to declare the Person thus tried altogether sinless; but it is to declare him not guilty of the Charge brought against him. Before a Person can properly be said to be justified, he must be first accused of some Guilt, or else it would be only Commendation, and not Justification.

Deist. Who but God's Omniscieny can accuse us? None can know so much of our Guilt, as he who knows all Things.

Hew. God's Omniscieny can not be the Accuser, because that would be to suppose him not perfect in Knowledge; for if he accused his Creatures of being Guilty, and afterwards declares them not to be Guilty of what he charged them with; this is the same, as to say, he thought they had been Guilty, but was mistaken. It would be a Disgrace for one Man to accuse another of Guilt, and afterwards confess he was not Guilty of that which he had before charged him with; so that it is no less than Blasphemy, to say God accuses such whom he Justifies: And as to be
Justi-

Justified, does signify to be declared not Guilty of a Charge brought against them; so this Accusation from which God clears or Justifies, must be brought by some other Being or Beings, and not by God who justifies them. *Secondly*, To consider who are the Persons thus freely Justified in the Scripture Sense, and then it is the Ungodly, *Rom. iv. 5.*

Deist. I know it is there said, that he that is God, justifies the Ungodly: But this appears to me contrary to Reason and the Nature of Things; so that I am inclined to think that such Doctrine cannot be divine, but human Policy to get Money by it, as the *Papists* do by their craving Pardons and Indulgencies to those who have Money to pay for it. But the *Calvinists* can be justified at a cheaper Rate; for they profess to be justified by Faith, and yet affirm that they were justified before they were born. Plain Contradictions! The Christian Religion looks to me to be only a Heap of Confusion, and even the *Arminians*, as you call them, I think had better turn *Deists*, than hold with so many Contradictions. What signifies their telling us that *Paul* meant that God justifies Men who were ungodly, but now are turned, and become godly and righteous Persons; that is all one as to say, *Paul* said one Thing and meant another; for when they were turned from their Ungodliness, then they could not be said to be of that Number: And so according to them, what *Paul* says is not true; and if so, then it must be a Lye; and if God does justify the Ungodly, then the *Calvinist* may, I think,

think, put in for a Share amongst you ; and if God does not justify the Ungodly, then *Paul* has not done you Justice. Suppose a Nobleman should say, Such a Day I will invite the Poor to Dinner ; but he means he will invite those who were poor, but now are rich. Is not this a plain Deception ? So to say, God justifies the Ungodly, because he justifies them who were so, is a manifest Falshood : And *Rom. v. 10. Paul* said, *When we were Enemies, we were reconciled to God by the Death of his Son.* It is not because they repented and turned to God, that they were thus reconciled to him ; but because of the Death of his Son, whilst they were Enemies. Who can call this rational Doctrine ?

Hew. Sir, if we take in two other Ideas, then I think we may make these and many other Texts appear to be rational. As *First*, That Satan and his Angels are the Accusers of Mankind. *Secondly*, That this Justification is only of a temporal Nature. As to the *First*, you cannot say it is contrary to Reason, to suppose that evil Angels should accuse Men, seeing such Beings are both able and willing to perform such ungenerous Actions. And I have already proved, that none can be properly justified, before they are accused ; and that God cannot be the Accuser of those whom he does justify : So that if God justifies any, as Scripture says he does, then they must be first accused by some other Being, and not by God : And who can we think of so likely, for so wicked Employment, as those evil Angels, especially as they are represented as the Accusers of the Brethren ? *Rev. xii. 10, 11, 12. Job* is said

to be accused by *Satan*, of not being sincere ; as tho' he had said, I have been stripped of all. If *Job* was so served, he would be as bad as I have been. *Sodom* and *Gomorrab* were accused of being exceeding Wicked. But more of this by and bye. Secondly, This Free Justification of the ungodly World, was only temporal ; that is, a being freed from present Destruction. My Reason for this Thought, is because we are frequently assured, that the ungodly World should be condemned. Now if the same Persons, who are said to be justified freely, are, notwithstanding, in Danger of being condemned ; then it is certain that the Justification was only from past Accusations : If they are again accused, they are as liable to be condemned, as tho' they had never been justified. And is not this the Nature of Justification at all Times ; that it is a being declared not Guilty of the Charge brought against them ? It is not a being declared perfectly innocent, if a Man is Guilty of being put in Prison, and is accused of being Guilty of Death. In such a Case, he ought to be declared not Guilty ; he is acquitted of the Charge brought against him. It is my Opinion that *Christ* did more for that Generation, in which he lived, than for any ever since : And, I suppose, they needed more super-natural Assistance than any since. My Reason is this, because he is said to be a Propitiation, or, as it is in another Translation, a Reconciliation for the Sins of the whole World. It is contrary to common Sense to say Persons were reconciled, who were not then in Being ; for that would be the same as to say, Persons were reconciled together before they

they were at Variance, 1 *John* ii. 2. This Text speaks so plain, that either we must allow that *Christ's* Propitiatory Sacrifice was intended only for that Generation, or else Men may be at Variance or at Enmity before they are born, which but very few have so much lost their Reason, as to believe. He is said to make an End of Sin, and to take away the Sin of the World ; which I think cannot be said to be done to any other Generation, because they, at that Time, had no Sin to take away. I could produce other Arguments had I Time. *Thirdly*, It will appear, if we consider a few Arguments, that *Christ's* Undertaking, was not to prevail upon God to spare the World, but to stop the Rage of evil Angels ; or, in other Words, to conquer the Power of Darknes. This appears to be the Case, because *God so loved the World, as to send his Son, not to condemn the World, but that the World may be saved.* The Scripture I think makes clear Distinctions between these Things. Now, tho' you may not believe the Bible, because there appears to you unreasonable Propositions contained in it, yet I expect that you shall not reject any Arguments agreeable to Reason.

Deist. I will not.

Hew. As to the Persons thus Justified by *Christ's* Blood, I take to be all the World of that Generation, both Godly and Ungodly ; for as they are said to be Justified by *Christ's* Blood, so the Wicked must have the same Share in it as the Good, because it is without a Condition. I conceive it is otherwise, when Men are said to be Justified by Faith ; because that is a Condition :

For, according to that, they who do not believe, are not under the Promise of being Justified in that Sense of the Word : So that there are two Sorts of Justification ; the one without any Act of Men, by *Christ* alone ; the other by Faith, which is an Act of Man. *Secondly*, As to the Sort of Justification by *Christ's* Blood alone, I take it to be, as the Apostle said, only a Justification of Life, and this extended to all the World then in Being ; that is, all Mankind were at that Time accused of being Guilty of such Crimes, as that all the World deserved to be destroyed, as *Sodom* and the Cities about it were accused of being Guilty of such Crimes as they thought fit for Destruction. Agreeable to the Apostle's Words. *Rom. ix. 29. Except the Lord of Hosts had left us a Seed, we had been made as Sodom, and had been made like to Gemorrah* ; that is, utterly destroyed. The Reason frequently given, why a City, Kingdom, or the World, ought to be totally destroyed, is because they are universally Wicked. Thus it was with *Sodom* and the Old World, and with the *Canaanites*, and the *Israelites* that succeeded them : They were ripe for Destruction, when they were universally corrupt and wicked. And thus, when the World was overspread with Ignorance and Wickedness ; then in this the Fulness of Time, God sent forth his Son, made of a Woman, made under the Law, to redeem the *Jews*. And also, it is frequently said, that he tasted Death for every Man ; died for the whole World, for the Good and for the Wicked, or Ungodly, *Rom. iv. 5*. To make it yet more plain and familiar : Suppose when *Sodom*, and the Cities of the Plain were

accused, as it is represented, *Gen. xviii. 21.* of being exceeding Wicked: I say, suppose *Lot*, or somebody else, had wrought Miracles, as our Lord did in his Days, and thereby have turned ten Persons to become righteous, then all the City would have been saved, or acquitted from the Charge brought against them, for the Sake of the ten righteous Persons, *Gen. xviii. 32.* Agreeable to our Saviour's Words, *Matt. xi. 23.* *If the mighty Works which he did, had been done in Sodom, they had remained unto this Day:* That is, they had not been destroyed, and so had been Justified in the proper Sense of the Word; they had remained a People till this Day. Now if the Person had thus saved *Sodom*, by working Miracles, and had died in the performing of his Office; then it might be properly said, that he Justified them by his Blood. And I think our Lord spake to this Purpose, *John xii. 31.* *Now is the Judgment of this World, now shall the Prince of this World be cast out:* That is, as I take it, the Accuser of Mankind does insist upon it, that this World should be judged now; and that his Desire being answered, will prove his Destruction. He shall now be cast out; for none can be judged or tryed for any Crime, unless they are first accused of being Guilty of that Crime. And the Prince of this World, and his Angels, are frequently represented as Accusers of Mankind; and he having had Success in the Destruction of *Sodom*, might perhaps think to prevail for the Destruction of the whole World. This appears to me to be the Case, because our Lord says, *Ver. 47.* *I came not to judge the World, but to save the*

the World: And just before his Death, he tells his Disciples, that *the Prince of this World is judged*, John xvi. 11. From these Texts we may learn, that the World, and the Prince of the World was judged; and the Consequence was, that the Prince was condemned, and cast out, and the World saved. And both are said to be done by *Christ's* undertaking Death and Sufferings, *Colos. ii. 15. Rom. v. 10.* compared. And he, it is said, was tempted, that he might succour them that were tempted; and that he was made perfect thro' Sufferings. I take it that our Lord tasted of our Infirmities, that he might be able to judge, whether the real Cause of the then Wickedness of the World, was in them or their Prince; and it was found that the Darkness and Ignorance of the World, was the Cause of its being so Wicked; and that the God of this World, was the Cause of that Darkness the World was thus overspread with: And therefore, whilst he accused others, he was condemned himself. Just as tho' a Governor of a City should use all Endeavours possible, to draw the Inhabitants of that City from paying dutiful Allegiance to their King; and by his Mis-representations, had at last caused these People to act in open Violence against their rightful Sovereign, and then go and accuse them before his and their King, of their treasonable Actions; do you think, in such a Case, it would not be just and wise, to cast such a Governor out, and impute the People's Sins to their being mis-led? that is, acquit them, as not really deserving such Punishment for such Sins of Ignorance; which is the true Meaning of the Word *Justify*, to declare them not Guilty

Guilty of the Charge brought^d against them. Now, suppose in the forementioned Case of *Sodom*, as our Lord supposes it possible, that they might be saved, if Miracles had been afforded them: I say, in such a Case, if the Person thus sent to work Miracles, and thereby turn such to Righteousness who were not thoroughly hardened in Sin, and so save the whole City, and he himself should be murdered in the Execution of his Office; would it not be strange, that a Set of People should arise of another Generation, and affirm, that as it was declared by some of these righteous Persons, that that Person's Blood, who turned them to Righteousness, was the Cause of the whole City's being justified and saved; that they should therefore affirm that God punished him, tho' innocent, to let the Wicked go free: And that God had given it into the Hands of the Priests and their Company, to justify whom they please, for the sake of that innocent Man's Blood, be they never so wicked in all future Generations. A Stock of his Blood being, as they say, laid up in their Hands for that Purpose. Suppose another Set of People should arise, and say, it is true, we are Justified freely by his Blood; but it is not whom the Priest pleases, but it is such whom God has eternally picked out for that Purpose, and all others must perish, only because God would not impute this innocent Person's Blood and good Works to them. Who would think that such Doctrines could be drawn from such Actions? Whereas it was that Generation only, who were actually Justified in the true Sense of the Word *Justify*; for had ten righteous Persons been found in
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Sodom, the whole City, we are told, would have been saved; that is, acquitted of the Charge brought against them, of being so exceeding wicked, as to be fit for total Destruction. Now, I say, if *Sodom* had been thus saved, and so remained to this Day; it would not be proper to say, the Generations of these *Sodomites* ever since were Justified by that Man's Blood as their Fathers were; because when that Act of Justification past, they, the then unborn Offspring of *Sodom*, were not capable of being either accused or justified. It is easy to apply this to the present Argument of Man's being Justified by *Christ's* Blood; that is, saved from that Destruction then designed for them: We, their Offspring, could not in any proper Sense, be said to be Justified at that Time, so long before we were born: And to Justify, is an Act that requires some Time for it; and when once that Act is past, it can never be repeated, that is, when Men are Justified, it must be for something laid to their Charge in Time past; and if any Thing of that Nature happens, after this Act of Justification is past, then there requires, in such a Case, another Act of Justification, the former Act not being capable to discharge Persons from any other Charge, than that which was then brought against them. So that if any are Justified by *Christ's* Blood since that Generation, it cannot be by that Act of Justification then past in that Generation. Now which do you think would prove the greatest Mortification to the Prince of the Power of Darkness, either to have it proved, that he was the real Cause of their Wickedness, whom he accused of being so wicked,

ed, as to deserve to be made like to *Sodom* and *Gomorrhah*, or his being told that the Son of God had paid Men's Debts, and did never design to pay any of his. I say, which is the likeliest Way to bring an evil-minded Being to Shame ?

Deist. I confess you have given a much more rational Account of Free Justification by *Christ's* Blood, than I have heard before ; but because you oppose the common Notion of Christians, you ought to consider whether you may not be mistaken.

Hew. Sir, I shall offer a few Reasons for it ; and if you cannot contradict these Arguments, then I hope you will farther consider of it. First it is said *Isaiab* liii. 11. that he should Justify many by his Knowledge, which is, as I take it, *viz.* he shall have so much Knowledge, as to discern when Men are, or shall be accused, by the Accuser of the Brethren, whether the Accusation is just or not ; and so by his Knowledge shall justify many, even as a good Judge will endeavour to penetrate into the true Nature of the Accusation, and how far the Accused is Guilty of the Charge brought against him. *Secondly*, This Sort of Justification is most agreeable to free Agency ; for if the Notion of the *Papists*, or the *Calvinists*, concerning this Doctrine be true, then we may justly say, that none ever was Justified by *Christ's* Blood, as free Agents, or because they were found not Guilty of the Crimes laid to their Charge. But my Notion of Justification, is every way suited to the Capacities of reasonable Creatures ; and therefore I think none can justly object against it. If Men were taken into favour with God, only

for the sake of *Christ's* Obedience; which cannot be the Case: Yet even that cannot properly be called Justification. They might be said to be accepted, but could not, for that Reason, be declared not Guilty; they may be forgiven, and so acquitted: But that is very different from being so acquitted, as to be declared never to have been Guilty of the Crimes laid to their Charge. Thus, you see, that according to the Notion of the *Papists* and *Calvinists*, none ever were Justified by *Christ's* Blood. *Thirdly*, This my Notion of Free Justification, is agreeable to God's known Perfections, and that theirs are not. I am sure if a Judge was to do as they suppose God does, he would be accounted the vilest Judge that ever the Earth bore. For if, as the *Papists* say, that God has put it into the Priests Power to justify or indulge whom they please, be they never so wicked, this supposes God to be neither wise, just, or Good. But if, as the *Calvinists* will have it, that God shares out his Son's Blood himself, to justify, or rather indulge a very few, and all the World besides must be damned for ever, because he has not appointed them a Share in his Son's justifying Blood. This supposes him to be unjust to his Son, to the Elect, and to the Non-elect; and not wise, because such a Conduct tends both to make the Elect and Non-elect careless of their Duty: It supposes him to be unholy, because he gives no Motives to Virtue, either to the Elect or Reprobates. But my Notion of Free Justification, is agreeable to all God's Perfections, namely, that when the World was overspread with Ignorance and Error, by the Sublety and Malice of

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malicious subtle Beings, that so the World might be totally destroyed. That then, in the Fulness of Time, God sent forth his Son, to rescue Mankind out of Satan's Hands.

Deist. Could not God have redeemed Mankind without the Help of his Son?

Hew. God could have brought you and I into Being without the Help of our Parents, if he pleased. Can you prove it contrary to Reason and the Nature of Things, for God to conquer the Power of Darkness by the Instrumentality of his Son; if not then, it is out of the Question, according to your own Agreement.

Deist. I cannot say it is contrary to Reason for God so to act, if he please: But the most high God, I think can rule the highest Order of his Creatures without one to help him; and how can any be destroyed by evil Angels, without God at least permits it.

Hew. What do you mean by God's permitting Men to be in the Power of evil Beings.

Deist. To permit, is to allow or leave a Person to his own Liberty. To lay the Reins of a Horse on his Neck, is to permit him to go as he please.

Hew. Sir, I desire you to remember, that I am only considering what Account the Bible gives us of this Matter, and not what has happened in any Generation since. I do not suppose that those evil Beings have so much Power now as they had before the Coming of *Christ*. But their not publickly shewing their Power in our Days, do not sufficiently prove, that they never did in any other Generation. May we not as well ques-

tion the Truth of every Thing our Eyes have not seen, as to question those Things related in the Bible, if they are not contrary to Reason. It would be very strange and wonderful in our Days, to see a Man nine Foot and a Hand's Breadth high, whose Coat weighed a hundred and fifty eight Pounds, 1 *Sam.* xvii. 4, 5. And because there is no such Man in our Generation, is that a sufficient Reason for us to question, whether there was ever such a Man; surely no: And so we may say of every Thing else related in the Bible, if those Things therein related are not contrary to the Reason and Nature of Things. Now if God did permit evil Angels to hurt and destroy Men, according to your Description of the Word permit; that is, allow or give them leave so to do, that is the same as to say, God delivered them into their Hands to be punished. They were God's Executioners to punish Men for their Sins: But then this ought to be remembered, that these evil and cruel Beings oftentimes made the most of the Power God gave them, and therefore Sacrifices were appointed to stop their Rage, as may be seen in many Passages of the Old Testament, 2 *Sam.* xxiv. 16. and 25. compared. There we find the destroying Angel was about to destroy *Jerusalem*, and was stopt by Offering of Sacrifices.

Deist. Do you suppose these destroying Angels, could go beyond their Commission?

Hew. Why may we not suppose that those may go beyond their Commission, as well as wicked Men, *Zech.* i. There we find, that when God was angry but a little, and delivered them, the
Jews,

Jews, with whom he was a little angry, into the Hands of the Heathen, they helped forward with their Affliction, that is, they punished them more than they ought: For which cause God punished the Oppressor, and relieved the Oppressed.

Now it appears to me, that the Sacrifice of *Christ*, answered all the Ends; the Sacrifices under or before the Law were designed to answer, that is, that his coming and proving that the then Wickedness of the World, was owing to their Ignorance, by the Subtlety and Malice of him, whom our Lord calls the Prince of this World, who was for the same judged and cast out, never more to have Power over the World, in the Manner he had it before. Our Lord afterwards had all Power given him, both in Heaven and Earth; and since that there has been no Occasion of these *Mosaical* Sacrifices of the Law, to stop the Rage of these evil Beings.

Deist. It is difficult to believe, that this World was ever thus pestered with Devils, as the Bible represents it.

Hew. Is it not as hard to believe, that this World was once very much governed by Giants, seeing there are none of them now to be found on Earth? But you agreed with me to be tried by Scripture, with the Proviso, that it was not contrary to Reason. Now, if you have any Thing to offer, to prove what I say to be contrary to Reason, I am ready to hear it.

Deist. I still insist upon it, that, according to your Arguments, another might have done the same which *Christ* came to do, and so have spared him the Trouble. Indeed, according to the
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common Opinion of Christians in general, none could do the Work he came to do, because, according to them, he came to merit God's Favour for Men, which Doctrine you cannot believe. I wonder that you seek to justify the Bible, from whence they received such Errors.

Hew. Sir, you are not, I hope, prejudiced against the Bible, that you take it amiss, that I take its Part?

Deist. No, I am not prejudiced at all; but I desire you to tell me what *Christ* did in this World more than the Prophets? They taught the same Doctrine that he did; and if he done no more than they, then why might not another have done it, and so have saved him the Trouble?

Hew. I know the *Papists* and the *Calvinists* do pretend, that *Christ* has satisfied God and his Law for Mens Sins, both past, present, and to come; and so render Repentance and Reformation needless, and God implacable. As I have shewn in my late Answer to Mr. *Chubb*, now, according to these pretended Christians, *Christ* has done something extraordinary, that is, darkened the Perfections of his Father, and encouraged the Practice of Sin. This is what none of the Prophets ever pretended to do. These Christians, as they call themselves, act like two Persons, who should here sentence, pronounce, both for and against Men on their Trial. The first, who imitates the *Papist*, goes away, and says, I have heard some Justified, and others condemned: And therefore, I the Pope, and my Priests, have Power to justify or indulge, and to condemn whom we please. The second, who imitates the *Calvinists*, says, I have heard some Justified, and others

others condemned : I therefore firmly believe, that those who were Justified, can never be condemned, be they for the future never so wicked : Yea, and I farther firmly believe, that those of their Sort, in any future Generation, cannot be condemned be they never so wicked ; that is, those, and they only, who can believe as I *John Calvin* do, and all others of all Generations must be damned. A third starts up, who resembles you *Deists*, and says, I have considered the Report you have both given of this Matter, and cannot pay any Regard to your Belief, or to your Judges Sentence, it being all Priest-craft. The Application of it is easy ; the *Deists*, I think, do not do well to condemn the Bible, only because the *Papists* and *Calvinists* have mis-represented it. If the two former had not mis-represented the Case, then there had been no Cause for the third to complain : So that I perceive the *Papists* and *Calvinists* are the Cause of Deism ; and the *Deists* I think are to blame, not to distinguish between the Language of the Bible, and the Mis-representations of these pretended Christians. According to me, *Christ* came to redeem all the World from under the Power of the worst of Beings, by his Knowledge. A Work, which I think none else could do : However, if you think God might have appointed another for that Work, that will not effect my Argument, because whosoever this great Work was done by, yet it answers the same End. The *Quære* only is, Whether God might not have picked out a more proper Person for that Use, if he pleased. And what is that to us ; and how can you prove that it is so ?

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Deist. Some Christians tell us, that Men were justified from before the World began.

Hew. Herein I think they are much mistaken; because they go from the Use of the Word: For they may as properly say, Men were of such a Trade, from the Foundation of the World, as to say, they were Justified from the Foundation of the World. They make no proper Distinction between justify, appoint, and elect. Men may be appointed to such Employments, and yet not justified in their well occupying in such Employment, the one is naturally before the other, as much as Actions must be before the Approbation of such Actions. So a Prophet may be said to be chosen or elected of God, before he is appointed to receive the Reward of his Doings. These Things, tho' as plain as that two and two make four; yet behold how it has puzzled the wise and learned Men of this World, after they have spent many Years in Learning, yet they are not learned enough to discern any Difference between Men's being appointed by God to do good Works, and his appointing them a Reward for their Obedience to him. And tho' a Child can easily make Distinctions between these forementioned Ideas, even without Learning; yet the learned Mr. Gill, and many more, will not perceive plain Truth. But *Fourthly*, These my Notions tend to convince the *Deists*, *Papists*, and *Calvinists*.

Deist. But what should make these Men so blind?

Hew. I take it to be as our Lord said, that they have blinded their own Eyes. Whether it was Love to Riches, Honour, or Pleasure, I will leave that to their own Consciences. In our Days
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is come to pass, that which has been in our Saviour's Days, namely, that even Children and Men unlearned, knows more of the Truth of plain Doctrines, than many wise and learned Men. The *Papists* and *Protestants* have long contended about Religion; and yet has hitherto too much overlooked the Cause of such Contentions. There could be no room for *Papists* Transubstantiation, if the true Intent of the Word Justify were well considered; for if that Generation only were Justified by his Blood, and that only temporally, to prevent the Rage of evil Angels, then it will appear even Folly, for this or any other Generation, since that in which *Christ* lived, to pretend to be freely Justified by *Christ's* Blood. There could then be no room to expect Absolution from Priests, or any Indulgency on that Account. This will overthrow all the Corruptions of Popery, and bring to Shame all their Priest-craft. This also will be just Matter of Shame to the *Calvinists*, and the *Methodists* their Followers, to think that they should separate themselves from Popery, and yet maintain that which supports these Errors, which they themselves condemn. Again, if *Christ* came to save the then present World of Creatures from temporal Destruction, that so this World might be farther tried, and not cut off in their Ignorance, then how greatly are they mistaken, who imagine that his Blood justifies Men to Eternity, even contrary to the proper Sense of that Word? They are wrong in their Notion of unconditional Election and Reprobation. How unreasonable is it to argue, that because God foresaw that his Son, would, by his Knowledge, justify many, as be-

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fore explained, that is, acquit them from a certain Charge brought against them, that therefore, he before appointed them to eternal Salvation, without any regard had to their Works? All these Mens Errors are built upon the same Foundation as that of irresistible Grace, and final Perseverance, and the like. Thus you see, that if this Doctrine of Free Justification is rightly understood, it naturally tends to turn the *Papist* and the *Calvinists* from their monstrous Errors.

Deist. May none be said to be Justified by *Christ*, but they of that Generation?

Hew. Yes, Sir, others may, I think, be Justified by *Christ*, besides them of that Generation; but not by that Act of Justification brought about by his Son's undertaking Death and Sufferings. As he is a Mediator, so it may be said in a proper Sense, that he does acquit them for whom he does intercede: And as he ever lives to make Intercession, so he may be said, to acquit or set at liberty, by his Intercession. But then this is not that Act the Apostles refer to, when they said, we were, or are Justified, signifying the Time past. That Act is already past, and cannot belong to any who were not then in being. But that is no Rule that others have not been Justified by any other Act since *Sodom* and *Gomorrab* had been Justified. Had there been found ten righteous Persons there ~~then~~, that is, all the Inhabitants of these Cities, except the ten righteous Persons, had then been acquitted or justified, without good Works: Being wicked, and without Faith in *Christ's* Blood, only because they, that is, the
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City in general, were not so universally wicked as was reported.

Deist. You say free Justification by *Christ*, is to be confined to that Generation only in which *Christ* lived ; and yet you tell us, that other Generations since may be Justified by him, as he is an Intercessor, tho' not by the same Act of Justification which past at that Time. If so, wherein do you differ from them? You seem to suppose they do not say, that Men of all Generations were actually Justified at that Time by *Christ's* Blood, but only that he made Provision for Men of all Generations at that Time, that they might be Justified in their several succeeding Generations.

Hew. The Difference is this ; they imagine that all Christians of all Ages since *Christ*, are Justified, on their Believing, as a Consequence of *Christ's* Death and Sufferings. This is not the Justification which I mean, because it cannot be extended to all the World, Godly and Ungodly. According to them, very few of Mankind share in it ; but when the Scripture speaks of the Benefits and Blessings bestowed on Men, as a Consequence of *Christ's* Death and Sufferings, it is always spoken of as free for all the World, Godly and Ungodly, without any Distinction. But when the Scripture speaks of Men's improving these Blessings of *Christ's* Gospel, then it talks quite different, both in distinguishing between these Persons and others, and also in promising to these eternal Life, as a Reward of their making good Use of these Gospel Blessings: But when the Scripture speaks of *Christ's* Blessings, as extended

tended to all, without Distinction, then there is no Promise of eternal Life joined with it.

Deist. Does not it sound odd to say, as you do, that all the World were Justified by *Christ*, and yet, at the same Time, your Bible tells you that all are guilty before God?

Hew. Tho' all Mankind may be said to be guilty before God, yet they who are accused, may be overcharged, that is, may be accused of being so guilty, as that they deserve to be destroyed, when at the same Time, they were ignorant in a great measure; and therefore it was more wise to instruct them, than to destroy them; and so they are acquitted not of all Guilt, but of not deserving to be destroyed?

Deist. Can the Accuser bring any more Afflictions on the Accused, by any or all of his subtle Insinuations, than would have befallen him, had he not been accused.

Hew. It appears to me, that *Job* had not suffered as he did, had he not been accused: And the Destruction of *Sodom* is represented as being occasioned by a Report that they were exceeding wicked. These Accusers of Mankind, are supposed by Scripture, to be turned out of their own Habitations, as *Adam* was turned out of Paradise on Account of Sin; and that these evil Angels were stripped of all their Glory, stripped naked to speak after the Manner of Men: And as they, as well as we, have to do with a just God, so these evil Beings may lay claim to a Demand, that other Sinners may be served as they were, stripped of all, and by that means many as well as *Job*, may have suffered by these evil Beings:
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And indeed were there none to accuse Men, I do not see any need of a Mediator. I do not take *Christ* to need to prevail on God to be kind to Men. No; his Office seems to be to prevent the Accuser from doing that Mischief, as otherwise he would do before the Coming of *Christ* into this World. It was common for to be openly and notoriously punished, for open and notorious Sins, especially if they professed to know and serve the only true God. And sometimes we are informed, that evil Angels were Instruments to inflict Punishment thereon; but since his receiving all Power, both in Heaven and Earth, Men are reserved to a future Judgment. These evil Beings do not appear to have such Power now as they had before; and therefore some are ready to judge, that there were never any such Beings in the World, because they do not now act as they did before *Christ* came in the Flesh. It does not appear now that any are punished or afflicted, any otherwise then to reform them, especially amongst Christians. And is it not infinitely better to be in the Power of the Son of God to dispose of us, than to be under the Power of evil Angels? Under the old Dispensation, the Fear of temporal Judgments were appointed to deter Men from Sin; but now it is future Rewards and Punishments, that are as Motives to forsake Sin, and chuse Virtue. Is it not strange to affirm, that because *Christ* came and cast out the Prince of this World from being God's Executioner, as not being fit for that Office; that therefore all Generations ever since, are pardoned and accepted on that Account? If you say all Men of all Ages since are par-

pardoned and accepted, because they believe : To which I answer, I question whether it is so much Virtue to believe now, as it was when Christianity was first taught to Mankind, or whether it is not a greater Trial of our Sincerity to profess *Christ*, to the Hazard of our Lives, than it is to profess him, when it is the Fashion of the World so to do. If it is more Virtue in the former Case than in the latter, as it is evidently the Case; then the Word *believe*, as it is frequently used by our Lord and his Apostles, cannot be as applicable to other Generations as it was to that, unless others labour under the same Difficulties. Now for Ministers to cite Texts at Random, and to tell the Ignorant that such Promises or Threatenings belong to them and all Generations, equally as it did to them it was spoke to, is not doing the Bible nor their Hearers Justice: As for Instance, when it is said, *If they believe in their Heart, and confess him with their Mouth, they shall be saved*. I say this Promise cannot be applicable to all Christians of all Ages, especially if we suppose it to mean eternal Salvation, as is the common Notion: For then it would be easy for many to be eternally saved, tho' never so wicked. And when our Lord said, *If ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your Sins*; these Words cannot be applied to all Generations, to such who had not sufficient Evidence. More Instances might be given.

Deist. If you examine *Rom. iii. 23, 24, 25*. you may see that Justification, which is there called free, is said to be thro' Faith: But you suppose free Justification to be without Faith.

Hew.

Here. I suppose the World in general to be Justified at that Time, thro' the Faith of them who did believe, even as *Sodom* would have been Justified, that is, acquitted from the Charge of being so wicked, as not to have ten righteous Persons amongst them, by the Righteousness of these ten Persons. So the World may be said to be Justified thro' Faith; for the Apostle here refers to all Mankind, both *Jews* and *Gentiles*, even to such who had no fear of God before their Eyes, Ver. 18, 23, 24. For all have sinned, and come short of the Glory of God, and are Justified freely, &c. Whereby it appears, that the Word *they* must mean all Mankind then in being: And as it is objected, that the Reason why some take Pardon and Justification to mean the same Thing, is because it is here called Remission of Sins that are past, Ver. 25. To which I answer, these very Persons who were justified, were also pardoned, that is, they were acquitted of the Charge brought against them, as that they were not so wicked as to deserve to be utterly destroyed; they not being so bad, but that there might be some Hope of their Amendment, because they were not all hardened in Sin. And as they were become so bad, thro' the Subtlety of their Prince, they should also be forgiven all their past Sins. Here tho' these Persons are freely Justified, and pardoned their past Sins; yet the Act of Justification and Pardon are very different. Now if these Words must be understood, as to belong to all Generations, that God will always, thro' *Christ*, pardon all past Sins from one Generation to another; that is,
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he will pardon all Sins: For when once Sin is committed, then it is past; and so all Sin may be called past Sin: But I suppose there was a Time, when these Words were properly meant to that Generation. This will, I hope, help some of the *Calvinists* out of their Dungeon of Mistakes, as well as the *Papists*; and I hope you will at last see the Beauty of the Christian Religion.

If any shall think proper to object against any Thing I have wrote, I intend either to defend it, or publicly acknowledge my Mistake.

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Alce. Rose 17-105